

[IMAGE]

# Healthy Holidays

By Editorial Staff

Five pounds, 10 pounds, 15 pounds or even more: How much weight do you gain in an average holiday season? This year, buck the trend with some simple planning. Take these six suggestions to heart and enjoy the holiday season the healthy way.

## 1. Family Fitness

What better way to counterbalance the extra calories you're sure to consume this holiday season than with some calorie-burning, cardio-benefiting exercise that involves the entire family? Reminiscing with relatives is great, but why not bond with them and stay in shape at the same time with a game of touch football, a snowball fight or even a long walk around the neighborhood?

Healthy Holidays calendar - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **2. Portion Control**

We're not saying you can't sample the vast array of cakes, pies and other holiday treats heaped on the table; we're just saying don't overdo it. Portion control is important all year, but it's vital when faced with a daunting supply of high-carb and even higher-sugar foods. So indulge a little and feel good that you've indulged; but don't overeat and end up spending the holidays immobile.

## 3. Holiday Helper

Whether you're at home or away for the holidays, taking an active role in holiday preparation can be better than a trip to the gym; getting the house in order, preparing the food and cleaning up (hopefully with some help) afterward will burn plenty of calories. And remember, you can prepare your own entree or side dish and ensure you have at least one healthy item to eat.

## 4. Bring It Along

You're a thousand miles from home at your parents' house, nowhere from your favorite gym or your favorite healthy foods. Fortunately, you remembered to pack a few essentials, like whole-grain energy bars, protein powder and a pair of exercise bands. Mix in a little exercise and nutritious food with the "bad" stuff

and you'll feel better about life away from your healthy comfort zone.

## **5. Safety in Numbers**

Healthy Holidays workout - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark Keep in mind that when faced with the holiday season, you don't have to face it alone. Whether it's splitting up the holiday shopping with your spouse, recruiting a few family members to help cook a (semi) healthy holiday meal, or making a pact with your best friend to stick with your exercise program during the hustle and bustle, do it together and you'll be more likely to get it done.

## **6. Enjoy Yourself**

This is the holiday season; don't turn it into an agonizing, moment-by-moment game of "Should I eat this?" and "When can I get away to the gym?" Remember, good health is about minimizing stress as much as it's about eating right and staying physically active. So enjoy the time away from work and with loved ones, even if it comes with a (little) more food and a (little) less exercise. You deserve it.

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